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Against Germany

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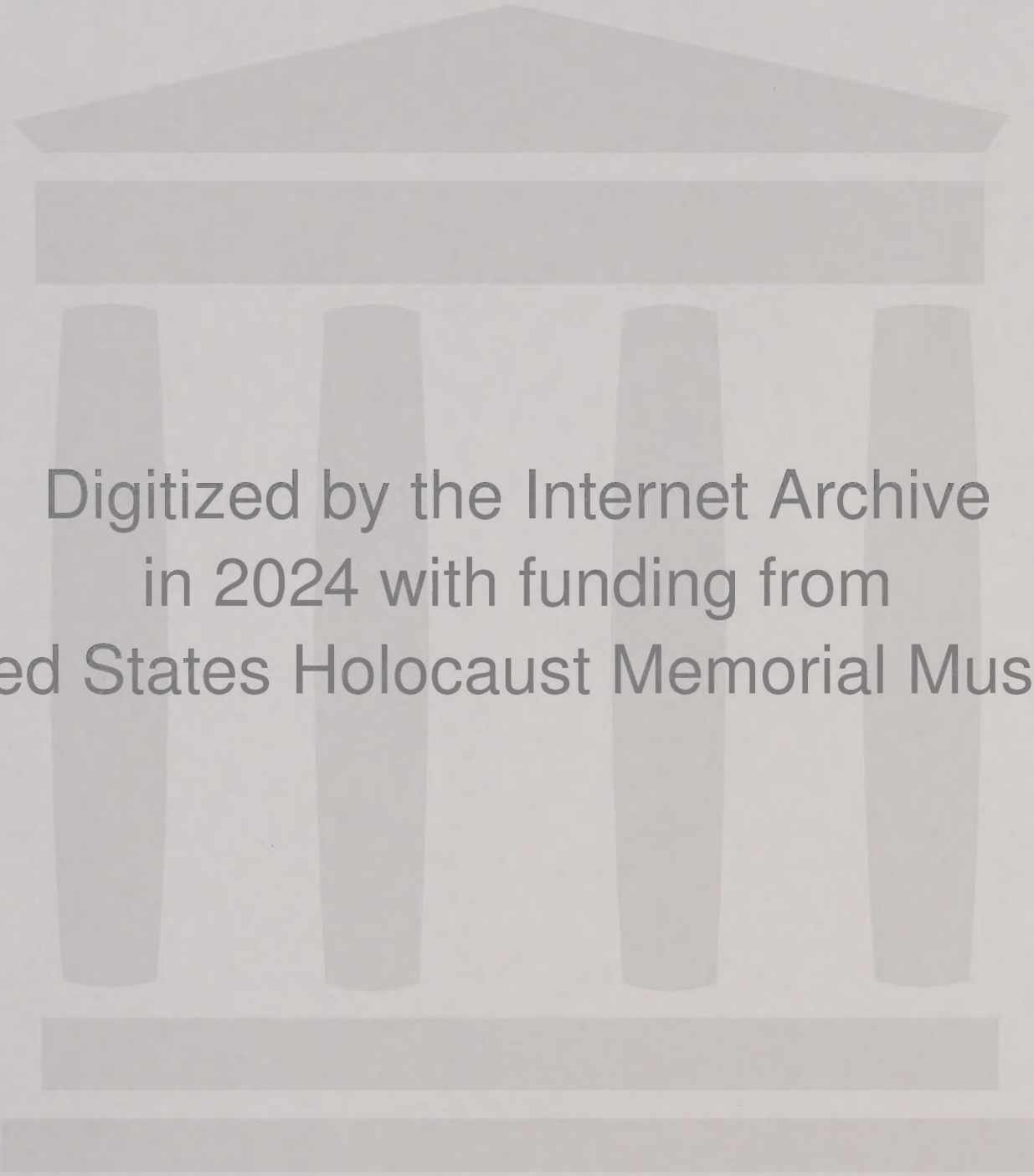
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Poems
of Jewish Death

by Robert Mallat

translated by
Gary Gach



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for my dead son,
that he might know ...

i am also christ ...

we
we our selves
were the chosen people
were blood of christ
and his mercy

we
infinitely great and silent
infinitely touched by the grace of silence
and without a prayer
and with no other church
but that of our hands

we
we our selves
out of millions living
with mankind's breath
humanity's gaze
impure or pure but born with christ
his direct source
and designated to be those he would love

and i have nothing more for speaking
but a rustling of voice amidst the sprouted crosses

jewish i've walked all over the earth
and jewish i'll recognize the earth by its fragrance
of bruised flesh
of trampled flowers
jewish i've walked all over the earth
and i didn't believe that night could end
with a blaze
as that one i saw
in the wide streets of a happy country

jewish i've walked all over the earth
recognizable
by my multiplied body
by my love of melancholy
all my glory
was in my effacement

jewish maybe
jew by blood and hue
jew for learning
all the laws of the world not one's own
jew cleansed of sin
and covered with the sweat of sin not yet committed
jew ripened in the heart of winter
jewish man
jewish woman
jew
dead wave and finally undone

jew with the hue of parched earth
jew with the hue of moist stone
jew with the hue of stale bread
color of sky
color of mountain
color of flux and reflux
color of trouble and floods
color of nakedness too naked
of life too raw
of flesh and ink
jew you are only dust
and you won't return
as ash
nor by woman
nor the sea nor straw nor flame
you won't return to day
you won't back upon the cross
even if you'd wished

he was there
in me
and amidst us
he was there
the son of man
he was there
as memory
was only bitter fruit

he was there
in me
and amidst us
already bruised
already betrayed
already gnawed
millions of jews
torn away from their tranquil death

opaque body
transparent body
body of the last rains
dismantled body
body by dint of fever
and miscut nights
wounded body
humiliated body
bruise
body
abandon
body
body for a wandering agony
body of jew
become millions of times more

dead
dead
dead
dead children
dead innocents
dead jews
dead
at all hours and at all ages
dead
in this arid garden where nothing stirs
dead
from being abandoned by the echo of our voices
a hundred times dead
buried in our chains
conserving within our selves our death
and its emaciation
dead in the pyre
dead in winter
dead in solemnity
dead in uncertainty
dead
asking for forgiveness for wishing to die

i hadn't defended my soil
no soil to defend
trees
stones
earth
i had nothing to defend
i hadn't defended the dust
the sun
the leaves
flowers
blood
voices of those belonging to me
i had nothing to defend
as i was nothing
i didn't come from any part
undoubtedly one day i arose
from mud
from stolen bread
from poisoned wheat
from all which made my name jew

love is nakedness no more
love is no more
accessory of nakedness
nested between lips in the night
nakedness
is no longer source of pure shadow
mid-voice
mid-gesture
fruit rind
the jewish child
born of this nakedness
is clothed only by its bones

he is face of stone
he is supple stone
he is stone he dances on this vein of the stone
he is made of the stone's sleep and honey

he is still stone
he faces all the forms of the stone to the sun
and the child is born in wintertime
the child is done
he has
the beauty of the alphabet of the stone

i've been in danger of death
since birth

since my birth
i shield myself from blows
i am spat upon
since my birth
my bread the color of rats
my wine the taste of straw
since birth
deaf blind i learn to gather death within me

i was entered alive
i was bent alive
i was laid alive
alive i thought myself mad
i was made into lamentation
i became insect life
death breath

i was entered alive
i have brushed wrists
with other living beings
alive i spoke of death all around

i have the right to cry out
i have the right to call as witness
the silence of the world
i am the man wounded by silence
i am the animal designated for the offence
for the grave dug in the chalk of my bones
i have all rights
i am the jew i am the jewish people
i am also christ when everything falls apart

a world shut, trees no longer finding sap ...

ramparts
our fear
no stone trembles
no breeze from a sea bluer than the storm
flows between the flames of our fever

time in times past
resembling today
time of death bed
time of foreknowledge
time
mirror
losing its innards
time of sun already at twilight

ramparts
our fear
bent with each step
no star to guide us
no cloud in the sky at dawn
to make us remember rain on raped wheat

time of shattered clarity
time of all four seasons in each stiff finger
time of fear strangely humdrum and brotherly

i knew it
my death was that
my death was that of the word
that of writing
my death was accompanied by birds unable to fly
my death was accompanied by animals of cold lands
i knew it
i'd read it in the look of newborn babes
i knew it so well i didn't believe it

i had nowhere to play
but burnt gardens
doorless churches
moonless graveyards
nothing to play with
but fingers they tore from me
my skin far away
my face forgotten
my soil muddy and my sores living
i had nothing to play with
but deeds too slow

forgotten the lessons learned
i will learn your name lord jesus

such as i dreamt it
life was but a suite of steps
equal and calm
and clad with grass

such as i dreamt it
life had but one face
yet whose eyes
saw on all sides

such as i dreamt it
life
mine
would never cease beating

i loved the vine
only for its autumn
stones
for their tremor
trees
for their faithfulness

now i'm shut
body and vine
tree and sex
i bathe in mud
my eyes are turned toward mud
i drive deep into mud
into forgetfulness
each anniversary there was a star

in those times each bore a name
in those times i had that which pitied me
in those times i had
palaces to furnish
steps to pace from one window to another

i was myself and i was all the others
i was my heart and i was my memory
and the depth of the sea and the king's highway
and the trees of our region of cornouailles
and the extinct volcanoes still smouldering

in that time i had you and you were open to me

between two doors the rage
and ache of being alone
and the desert between doors

i am living amidst the ruins
i am living in the gardens
tender at dawn where spring begins
my head sometimes profound planet
cathedral condemned to stones

between two doors
winters of blood
wings of trees
workplaces
where the road's teeth reclose over my kisses

kneeling in earth
to await the blows
here
everything tortures me
here
the hangman has no mask
here
bit by bit spit dries up
here
is death still heavier than life

to endure
what will be endured

be eye
be hand
be leg
or mown grass
or widowed stone

but endure

what will come
to prolong the night of vigil
to the night of the next day
to endure as long as roads
endure as the depth of nests
endure holding your breath
but endure as long as life endures

sarah
of shadows
sarah of love's fresh scents
sarah of violent love
of blessed bread
sarah of night circumcised
by comings and goings by cries within you
by the tearing apart of the reclosed wound

sarah of bound wounds of hollowed-out eyes
sarah of the beginning of the end
sarah of an opaque city where war entered
through all the doors
of all houses marked by a star

sarah on a cross
sarah in flames
sarah believing
sarah naked gaping
sarah spitting lava
and walking with weary steps

sarah myself opposite me coming closer
sarah clad in my hands
sarah capped with my hands
girded by my hands
flowering from my hands

uncrowned humble sarah
tarnished and rough moving and cavernous
thrown here thrown there
unbelievable landscape frozen with fright
beneath a sky too high
straight chimney

sarah for my memory
sarah for my salt and for my bread
sarah blighted
sarah trampled
sarah foliage broken off its forest
sarah face torn from its shadow
sarah

you living me living
mingled but never confused
one but never unique
laced interlaced
bluish vine up over the rooftops
pair that nothing but wind can sunder

sarah
my souse my room my exile
my emptying also my serpent and my tree
and my sadness and my sweetness of being alive
sarah my motionless garden

don't leave
turn your head toward me
look at me
i am the one who's loved you
loves you will love you has still loved you
don't believe them don't follow where they lead
they haven't told you everything but me I know all
i know
death doesn't always shed blood but lives on ashes

i gave it all away
i've nothing to protect
blood too fluid crosswinds
i gave it all away
i'm lost amid the humble cattle
leading the way to the swamps

i gave all of me away
i'm nothing I'm nothing more
blind deaf without horizon
nor tree to stay standing
nor corpse for warm sleep
i'm no longer anything
nothing
no longer saying yes or no

thus
bird
thus
death
gray wing poised
at the foot of graves
so many dead yes so many dead
for so few coffins
so much suffering for so little remorse
so little blood for so many corpses
so few crosses for so many lain under

thus the deed of death
thus the tremor upon the lips of the dead
who'd wish to arise one last time

flesh therefore is no more
it is now leaf with damp earth
it has come
undone from me
it has grown putrid
it smells and tastes
of ebb tide
flesh therefore is no more than scales of snow
edge of stone
raw wheat at the return of peace

warder of each moment
warden on my trail
hangman at my steps
executioner at my blood's blossoming

jailer at my memory's entry
at the outlet of my pain
jailer
the bars of my cage
terminator
of near and far

big men clad in gray or in green or in black
yet i don't recognize the color of sky upon them
don't recognize the virtue of angels within them
and would pray for them even if my hands were chained

as i'd make life with death
here death heavy
death holding its breath
death putting to sleep
and without overshadowing

as i'd make death with life
as i'd make water with blood
as i'd make corpse with body
victim with victim guilty with innocent
miracle with ruin
prayer with procession
ship and cross
bullet and sobbing

as i'd make death with death
from this union
i'll emerge
more true
more real

it is no longer
my heart beating
it is something
unknown
it is the earth's
consciousness
in me
rising
tree
to take up high
those dear to me

as the weight of an eye now with no more gaze
as the tooth of fruit in its nakedness
crossroads where those already dead
are engulfed by those dead tomorrow

all these sounds
resonating within me
all these voices of the past
i burst
i am filled with outcries without tears

shadow made of bones hardly fleshed out
bruised bones
scattered flesh
shadow gnawed by the light whence it comes
shadow already shrouded
already lain upright against a wall
mud
salt
steel
where the eyes would be

rid of sleep
rid of the sun
alone
with a step weighing
with hours of snow and mud like gauze
rid of everything
but still heavier
with a thousand armed cries

virgin of blood and hate
i do not sleep
doubtless i have ever
and forever forgotten
faith's sleep

ever and forever forgotten
the thirst of the couple
and the drunkenness of pain

ever and forever forgotten
the garden path
become
the last windowless church

arrived
beyond the last hour
exiled in suffering
refugee
in a tomb teeming with bones
have i still mankind's name
or indeed am i
the one pulled out from death
to be killed every day

in my very great pain and in my fear
in my unclothed body black with ash
in my fear and ample pain
like rain all over me burning and burning
in my pain more living than i
in my acid and familial fear
in my dim light by dint of believing in it
in my light by dint of seeing it
in my betrothal like the trunk of a tree
in my weariness of even one bit
with the earth beneath my fingernail
dead leaf

i hadn't shown myself naked
you know my nakedness
i've weighed burning upon you
boiling lead i've inseminated you
thanks to you the jewish earth is fertile
if
they break the egg
stifle the cry

you know my nakedness
i've hurled the howl of fright and joy
all at once
upon the threshold of the promised land
i'd become colder than a charnel house

crooked finger
vulture beak
immense
and silent
ready to bite and tear
sentinel
pointed finger
armed to the fist
armed to the eyes
armed from head to toe
terrible guardian at the entrance of the ghetto
covered with a quivering veil
and sleep like a cloak full of holes
letting the blood of each star be seen

sleep had its laws ...

sleep granted
sleep denied
sleep of tomb and dust
sleep without space
without hue
sleep of the speechless tree
of the humbled vine
of the lost anchor

have mercy

sleep of faith at point of death
of the final word
of authorized slavery
sleep of the dead lain end to end
sleep of earth with shovelfuls
of sand leaf to leaf

have mercy

sleep of the labyrinth
where you find fixed upon mankind's eye
sleep of the door riddled with bullet holes
sleep of the street with shy shutters
of the garden with forbiddn lawns

have mercy

sleep
my insane sleep
my sleep without clothes
my nude sleep colder than a knife
my sleep more cut off than an umbilical branch
my golden sleep
my limpid sleep

...

my sleep standing up

have mercy

sleep counted to ten
sleep counted to a hundred
to a thousand
to a hundred thousand
sleep of the cipher of the desert
at the limits of a world reflected in windows
sleep without number and without eyelids

have mercy

have mercy on me
and on those feeding on my wounds
have mercy on the torn-out voices
for the rended cries
for the crushed tears
for the mutilated steps
for the trampled prayers
have mercy for the speeches words songs of a throat
[full of holes

come closer
who then are you
we are familial
we have
the same enemy
the same death at blood's apex
same stone-hewn face

come close to me
the time of fruit
the time of wasps
is no thicker than the profile of a cross

my own consciousness crossed out
utterly exiled to a night splattered with my blood
rotting with hatred and poorly doused memories
so near the sea
and hands sealed in stone of a grimacing country
at my center
and searching for
the warmth of living sleep
beast sleep
bird sleep
sleep of feather and flesh

they are dug into my memory
they are dug into my darkness
they are dug into the folds of my skin
a hundred times they violated me
they made me christian in body and in mind
in flesh and soul and past
they made me blood
they made me water
they gave me taste and disgust
they gave me the living and the dead
they also made me touch earth

attached to stone
as to woman
fed on stones
living on only stones
made of flesh and stone and the alternating heart
and the western gesture whence the wind flows
and death engulfed between the stones
and death speaking in the seashells
making itself heard
where stone and sea encounter each other's gaze

you riddled me with bullets embedded with nails
you put holes in me
you plugged the holes up with cement
you set me after what follows night
you scattered my beads on the ground
you trampled me
you left me for children to play with
so that they bite the fruit so that they eat the poison
you have had so many things for me
that i don't know anything anymore
you gave me death in wedlock

i am here and i remember
taking the sea in my wounded hands
i am here and i remember
my remorse at being the one looked at
being crammed with treasures
no fresh water for my hands
no blood for the dead
no stone for those laid to rest

in this workplace
cathedral
graveyard
our speech
our voices
were as mixed up as grass on carnival day

o this laughter of soldiers
undressed upon women's bodies
curved upon women's bellies
squatting upon women's bodies

o this laughter of soldiers
taking women
putting fire there
casting the stone
teaching pain and pleasure at the same time
pleasure to be taken and devour
pleasure to be more stained
than a tomb profaned

o this laughter of the soldiers
entered into our stall
if you aren't dead
remember
you had no pity nor remorse
nor mourning
in order to be sated
hitting full aware where ordered to
from whence you will perish
o this laughter of soldiders resounding
in the lone child's throat
in your pain
in your moment of birth
with men born just the same time as you

dawn sky
peace eye
fresh tomb

i'll weep for you
for myself
i won't have enough tears nor laughter
to celebrate the sabbath
nor to say the prayer for the dead
i won't have enough laughter nor tears
to return to my original birth

this time dead most dead
struck to death congealed in this death
with millions of others everyone for themselves/e,
this time dead
face eternally smashed
eyes eternally open
heart eternally on fire
this time dead a million times dead
dead in lands elsewhere
hidden in several earths
hands deprived of objects
breast broken
legs become useless for walking
wandering jew you've been given the repose of hell

this time death
death is this
to search for a word for each thing
other than the words learned
death this time with one's own eyes
not counting on yesterday or tomorrow anymore
being nothing anymore
than a bit of this world's past
death this time the open flank
roots of springtime i'll love only you

man
i am
man
i shout
man
i sweat
man
i swat
man
i sweat blood
man
i am blood
man
i am greater
than before the cross
man
i am more flame than fire
i am newer
fewer rarer
than having mourned everything
christ killed he's no more the cross

man
made
from sand
from flowers
from desires
from unruly summer
man
built on sand
stretched like an immense
skin
immense from one step to the next
immense from one sea to the next
and resonating
my eyes haven't understood at all the sadness of seeing

all death pertains to me ...

leave me this dead one before he is a bee
before the rakes mix him into the earth
leave him for me
he will be my winter as long as snow is airy
since the chimneys still leak
and spew their ashes below the wings of gulls
in search of grass

leave him for me i have a soul-load
the tree breathes underneath its bark
leave me this dead one
where teeth once were he pushes up flowers
i'll fasten a stone to his wrist
that he blacken in the hollows of tombs

i'll grow warm again in his presence
i'll make him my skin and my food
my weight my ache and my bed
and i'd recover myself in him
living heart against heart in anticipation
flinging ancient cries that awaken no one
free and naked with a nakedness equal to happiness
if i'd believe myself man in woman
howling victory and delivered from anguish

leave me this death
leave him for me
i'll wash his eyelashes
leave me this death
he is for me
i'm accustomed to his death-ugliness
i was his brother of salt and black bread

...

leave me this dead leave him for me
i've prayed all night long
so that he not be buried
so that he stay near to me
so that i forever remember
of what death is made and how i then live

my time
my times
my aches
my temple
my contemplation
my vine
my destiny
my discovered isle
my golden age
my my wheat come again
my self but my child
white gold my costume
heaven and earth my river
why
my june and my september
and my sun of death since i am alive

not to sleep
not to close one's eyes
not to kneel
nothing to see nothing to hear nothing to say
not to fold before them nor before one's self
to be nothing other
than one's own load

not to groan
not to move an inch
not to move a finger
nor a knuckle
nor a nail
nor a hair
to be nothing other
than one's own pain

not to waver
not to laugh
not to cry
nor smile
nor look
nor remember
nor account
for the moments of day or night
not to learn
the shape of stones
not to live
to be nothing other
than these roots at the crosses of tombs

shaking
sobbing
howling
not at death
but at its language
not at mankind
but at its face
not at doors
but at the walls
sleep
in the hollow of a death bed

it is said that at warsaw
christ used his hands
and his fists
and his nails
and his fangs

it is said that at warsaw
the stones
steel
wind
were in flames

it is said that at warsaw
the word fatigue
and the word hunger
had no more meaning
than the word freedom

it is said that in this city
he'd cried
bled
cried out
but he wasn't carrying the cross on his shoulder

all spring
they gave me
fields of husks and blood
they let me vomit
they let me wail
they let me die
an unforeseen death
nothing kissed my lids
nothing warmed my hands again
nothing brought the breast of grass back to me

i learned the cold seasons'
endlessness

a few prayers
escaped from the ghetto
that children
still learn
a few prayers
saved from fire
that i murmur
when it is time
merely words of peace
where sometimes death
is but the flux of resurrection

we were crowd
we were naked
we'd forgotten
the names of our brothers
the belly of our mothers
we'd lost the taste
for celebrations
and it was for us
that common ditches were dug

we were crowd
crowded one against another
facing the desert
facing the day
our skin had the smell of dead leaves

you must get up
you must walk
you must run
you must answer when you are questioned
you must lie at death
lie to blood
lie to blows
you must sleep
eyes open
your nails in your flesh
so as to know you're standing up

you must live
by heart
claw your heart that it agrees to beat

you must betray your faith yet live by it
get up jew
walk jew
run jew
answer the questions put to you jew
answer quickly
don't think
don't lie
jew
now the knives are bleeding

this sky is it that
beneath which one gave up
without having screamed
without having
unbolted one's rage
this sky
full of peace
is it that beneath which
one was stretched out
poorly prepared for the ultimate agony

vertigo or really abandonment
or really specter of death
or really simply hunger
thirst
heaviness of one's limbs
head in hands
polarized pain

vertigo the earth suddenly near then far
i no longer affect dreaming nor plowing
and know however that i am i
i repeat my name to myself
i say it aloud
the past is met only gropingly

it isn't even a face anymore
behind the armed windowpane
it isn't even your face anymore
in the brazier of flowers plucked from antiquity
no longer even your face nor
your bones borken by axe blows
nor your eyes' blaze
it's nothing anymore
than an embrace become forever stilled

that night we promised her
something other
than the teeth of the hounds
fed on rain
gorged on wind
swollen with soot
squatting upon our flesh and gnawing
we promised her something other
than night become opaque
bathed in blood and pus
no flag covering our bodies again
no shroud to clothe
millions of dead bodies of millions of sinners
faithful to a faith long since disavowed

i was made christ
i was made king
i was hand-picked
i was was bedded in a stable
i was made to be born and die in the same knell
i was given
seas and clouds
thunderbolts and tempests
i was made christ
i was made king
i was bedded upon a cross
and this wood
thrown naked into the river
served as an ark for flayed babies

long we'd waited
for the white sun of fir trees of august
we'd waited
long
for warmth to awaken our eyelids
long we'd awaited
this purified death
of martyrs

cold insects feeding upon me
sharp wind
drawn out
screams at dawn doused
snow of what year

now death and none will know where

bruised sky
tumultuous earth
stone loosed from its rock

now death and none will know how

in the pit
hands and feet and skeleton parts
hands and fingers taken apart body and soul destroyed

death now transfixed
god as my witness now death
i know i have returned from death
and i am propped up against death
and i am full all full of it
and i am thirsty for the death that tore me apart

one had to doubt oneself above all...

did i know the hounds were tearing your voice out
did i know the wind had finished breaking you
did i know night was hollowing out a tomb
so the morning after a hundred faces would be closed

mute

mute

mute you were calling me
with all your fever
you were calling me with your lips and with your hands

did i know in being born
at the foot of the camps' towers
the child you were nursing bore no name
did i know the earth herself was made
for devouring alive
burning through and through

did i know all that had i known it
did i know your clamors and your complaints
did i know you in the hollow of barbed
arms
stretched
hands
pierced
sadness
more than sadness
grief
anguish

...

did i know from the outset
was fear
next thirst
next hunger
if it is possible to hunger and thirst
as one has feared
as fear spreads out over you
as fear
is no longer only a single language

from the outset of this path did i know
at its end
i'd no longer even meet
ripened snow
accomplished springtime
did i know where my starved steps were leading me
did i even know
night was copulating with day
to design
the course of death

did i know death was
in my every gesture
did i know her
through my fingertips
did i know she was
right at sleep's detour
vertiginous
more miraculous
than a life badly lived

so as to live what
as need is only death
as i await the encounter with death
i wait for death to gather me
in her hands
and to become blended earth and ashes
parched earth
ashes
wildflowers

so as to live what
so as to live what else
can save me only the shame of living
the shame of dying
can save me only the weakness of dying
the strength of living half myself

was i the bitter throng
at the plague's crossroads
dispossessed of good and evil
without tomorrow
without future
disgorged of all past
shuddering
undressed
wearing only sweat

was i
the brow
the hand
the belly
its guts
its blind walk step by step

was i the laughter
the fall
the fever tremblings
the fist clenched
upon the bit of bread
snatched from the mud

was i the sour throng
in the famine's teeth
the throng's piss
its nails
its vermins
its breath's stench

...

was i the humble throng
the soldier's hands
endlessly pounded
was i
one by one
these dead
kneeling
alive
pray for me

and if i were armed
and if were armed should i kill myself
and i were armed
who should i kill

and if i were armed
should i raise up against myself
enormous
if i were armed
should i sooner begin to pray

love was what
and what atrocious face will survive
what face of death
what was love
what was love
was gaze turned to others
was call
was shattered ramparts
was what
was hope
awaiting others to come at last
and relieve us
from bonds plowing flesh to the quick

how much weighed our blood
no more than our bones
or your consciousness
no more than the sun's shadow
the hand laid to rest
no more than the eyelids closed
beneath the fiery light
of towns of yore

how much weighed our blood
nothing
but the weight of christ
still alive
multiplied a millionfold
dying
and being reborn each instant
under the blows of the invulnerable spear

and what's the right weapon
what arm
to help soldiers
even dead ones
what weapon
for the jew i'd help
before holding out my empty hands

and what arms are there
simply
the help of being no other place
no other season
but moved by the great open wind

and what's the right weapon
to wound
kill
conquer
efface the nothingness where i was nailed

pain have i known you
pain have i lived poorly with you
have i burned alive all across you
i was abandoned to you
you were thick
within me
pain have i loved you
will my strength perhaps be
to know my enemy overcome

all extinguished light ...

he hasn't risen from his throne
clad in white he hasn't arisen
hasn't come in our midst
hasn't said
shepherds you are my shepherds
i recognize you
for the first time my shepherds
i walk to your light
to the light of your blind faith

clad in white
he hasn't come in our midst
humble like us
like us mortal
like us marked
by an unmerited curse
he hasn't come clad in white in our midst
hasn't said
i'll share your meal
your misery your meal of misery
your tears for my holy thirst
and your common life and your common death

he didn't sit at our table
we hadn't any bread to offer
nor tears in which to wash his feet
nor sins to be redeemed
he wasn't sitting at our side
more naked and poorer than man at birth
he wasn't sitting in our midst
taking our hand taking our hands
the hounds throwing away their bite

...

he was denied us
he was denied mankind
he was hidden
within the folds of his silk mantle
he denied his voice and his deed
he denied his name and his gaze
he prayed for us perhaps
but even god didn't listen to him

there won't be any celebrations
the man didn't come
to accompany us
at dawn in the stone-strewn garden

there won't be any celebrations
and we will be lost
unto hope
unto the eternity of our last asylym

we awaited the one
who if he'd wished could have been
the messiah
and the shipwrecked castaway

he could have been
like us
shod with mud
crowned with earth
clad with blows
a stranger to his religion and his soil

but christ in him
had already dried up
nailed too high on his cross beneath the sun

... will be gospel

pushed by death into death
far from summer
deep into summer
fed on mud
gorged with cold
drowned in death
so beautiful and disfigured
by the suffering of every muscle
when it comes night i'll try to live
and what i'll say
then
will be gospel

destiny dispersed
destiny denied
destiny nevertheless fulfilled
i do not sunder my god
nor the light born of my denial
nor the cross
festering flesh
marking the nails
i do not sunder
anxiety vein by vein
anguish straining the muscles of my body
bruised numb and now and then flashing lightning

i leave you my name
i bequeath you
my stigmata
i'm not christ
yet christ came from me
i fed him
with my sparkling innards
i gave him bread and knowledge
and the blackish color of smoldering fire
and i felt sap being born
all along my decapitated body

it is me
i am speaking to you
weak-voiced
i have drawn near
dire but tenacious
angel but demon
i was able to cross over
the dreadful desert
which will reflourish

one day
i'll hear the cooing of the olive trees
no more
my face against earth
but my eyes towards the sky
the day
the sun no longer drags its chains
the day
when from all sides
risen from all the tombs on earth
unballasted from their fear and fury
they'll claim to be jewish
to escape their condemnation

i am given to live
i have it between my hands

i am given to breathe
to touch
to know

i am given the seven-branched tree
the sanctified bread
the confiding hand

i am given
the black sores of crucifixion
the torn veil
of resurrection

i am given
the wall of tears
the bitter taste of sin committed by others

i renounce you
although you may be my brothers
by your hands and by your face
i renounce you
trees with the same foliage
throng with the same bark
i renounce you
you'd issued
from the same dust as me
eaten the same flesh
and nevertheless
living you didn't know how to speak out

i promise you death
as it is vertigo
i promise you stone and massacres' red wind
i promise you'll be living
so as to overhear
your cries postponed to silence
i promise you this german death
hangman you'll offer your left hand for amputation

you wished me dead
you took me for dead
you wished me without return
without voice
without call
loaded with your sins and doubts
bundled up
with all the crucifixions

you wished me dead and unpurified
and unexpectedly here i am bleeding on your cross

our death
was yours
and you knew it well
our death
wasn't your birth
nor your coronation
it was your death
it was a poisoned river
a sky long polluted
a night forever enshrouded
our death
it was your sleep torn asunder

trees of galilee
i call you to mind
and don't know you at all

trees of galilee
i was stood up
against your trunks
and became your dawn and vine

trees of galilee
i have no story to tell you
except a long march
at star set
a forbidden sleep
a painful dream struck onto my memory

trees of galilee
if i touch you one day with my finger
if one day
i lean against you
too feed from your sap
i'd become taller than you
branch foliage and body
i'll put bread on the table
so long as
assassinated
i be returned home

you'd clothed yourselves in our death
you'd gone to bed on the dead
asleep upon the dead
awake upon the dead

you'd fed yourself upon their difficult death
you'd said nothing
silence
become your sole comrade in arms

you spread yourselves out
across the death of fog
across those with no name anymore
but that of jew
which our lord once wore engraved upon his breast

had the stars
spoken for us
had the sun
pled our cause
we knew nothing of it
yet perhaps
the cries of naked children
were smothering
the sound of your voices
o you i'd have named brothers
if i'd ever been able to speak

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optional

[not in original]

I am also pleased
a world wide, peace on earth
always had the same
All these people in the
and to have them all
all the people in the
will be happy